



August 28, 2024

**To: REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS  
BRANCHES & FACILITIES**

## **CATCA UPDATE**

As summer draws to a close, it's clear that this has been one of the most challenging summers on record for service delivery, placing immense pressure on our membership. Intermittent unit closures and restrictions have become common, and nearly all units have struggled with inadequate staffing. While it's encouraging that Nav has prioritized recruitment and training, and taken steps to mitigate the impact on frontline workers (such as allowing breaks during closures), the prospect of this situation persisting for years is daunting. Many members face the reality of working understaffed for an extended period. The toll on mental health and morale is evident.

It's remarkable what we've accomplished under these circumstances—a testament to the professionalism and resilience of our membership. As traffic continues to grow (with most units seeing an increase from 2023 and about a quarter seeing a rise from 2019), we continue to do more with less. It's in everyone's interest to keep planes moving, and we've done an outstanding job of that.

CATCA will keep staffing issues at the forefront, advocating for long-term solutions and short-term mitigations. A key focus will be pressing for better support and training for On-the-Job Instructors (OJIs). Unfortunately, this crisis has been decades in the making and won't be resolved quickly.

### **Fatigue:**

While not perfect, recent changes to the fatigue program have been well-received by the membership. While a few issues of interpretation and application have arisen, overall, the response has been positive. This success underscores the power of true collaboration, and we're grateful that Nav engaged with us on these changes.

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**Classification:**

There are ongoing discussions related to classification, particularly concerning the committee work initiated by the Letter of Understanding (LOU) signed with our last Collective Agreement (CA). Classification is always complex and contentious, but the board is committed to following through on the path determined by the bargaining committee. Progress has been slower than anticipated, which is frustrating, but we remain focused on finding solutions. Updates are regularly posted in the 'Classification Corner' on our website, and other reviews continue as usual.

**Seniority Bid:**

Offers for the latest seniority bid began going out this week. Given the staffing situation, opportunities to bid out are limited and many deferrals are lengthy, but we've placed a greater emphasis on developing realistic action plans with management to ensure fair and reasonable dates. Questions or concerns about dates and offers should be directed to your Regional Vice President (RVP), who can provide detailed information. We've also started archiving all action plans to ensure accountability.

The company's practice of issuing multiple deferrals remains a significant concern. We do not believe this practice is permissible under the CA and will pursue the matter through the grievance process.

**Benefits Review:**

Progress on our benefits review has stalled. While there are areas of agreement, we've been unable to finalize an agreement on some fundamental issues. We've agreed to participate in informal mediation to bridge the gap but are also preparing for a formal resolution process. Although our benefits package compares favorably to similar organizations, inflation has significantly eroded its value over time. We believe this is an opportunity for the employer to demonstrate their commitment to current employees and attract future talent by positioning us as an industry leader in this area. Mediation will begin next week, and we will provide updates as they become available.

### **Technology:**

Our tech notes newsletter will be out in September, but we wanted to briefly address the IWP rollout. Reviews have been mixed, with some positive feedback and numerous concerns. Although IWP supports the goal of commonality, it has simultaneously eroded many specific local adaptations that were advantageous to units. We're compiling an inventory of issues related to IWP implementation to present to Nav, aiming to address and resolve them. This is crucial not only for supporting controllers but also for ensuring that upcoming technological changes are implemented effectively. We need meaningful operational input at every stage of design, development, and implementation, followed by proper training, support, and post-implementation follow-up.

### **Fam Flights:**

The fam flight program continues to be a source of frustration, as many destinations remain unavailable. Although some have been approved, the list is still limited. The inclusion of conferences, particularly Communicating For Safety (CFS), which 89 members will attend in mid-September, has helped, but the program has lost much of its value. We're working to find ways to restore that. As the year-end approaches, please remember that the 90-day notice requirement is approaching quickly. Interested members should submit their requests soon.

### **Workday:**

Nav recently introduced a change in Workday that allows employees to set alerts for job postings. This feature was available in the past, and we've been requesting its return for some time, so this is a welcome development that will help members stay informed about career opportunities.

### **Aviation Document Booklets:**

A new exemption allows all holders of Canadian Aviation Document Booklets that were still valid on April 1, 2023 to continue exercising the privileges stated in their booklet **until March 31, 2025** or beyond if the expiry date affixed in the booklet is later.

**CEO:**

As you may know, our CEO, Ray Bohn, recently announced his retirement from Nav, and the selection process for his replacement is underway. CATCA is a key stakeholder in Nav Canada and has a strong interest in the selection of the new CEO. We will make our concerns and expectations clear while respecting the normal process.

**Professionalism and Respect:**

The dedication and professionalism our membership has shown over the past months and years are remarkable, and we are deeply grateful. However, the strain of the current circumstances has been evident at times. Balancing outside life with shift work is always challenging, especially when under constant pressure to give up days off, change schedules on short notice, and work short staffed. Please be patient and compassionate with your colleagues—everyone has their moments. It takes a collective effort to create a truly respectful and supportive environment, and we’ve never needed that more than we do now.

Please raise any issues with your union reps so we can address them early before things escalate or fester. CATCA will continue to collaborate with Nav to ensure that any necessary support is provided to individual members who may need it.

One of the best parts of this job for most has always been the work environment. We all have to do our part to ensure that benefit is maintained and available to all.

On behalf of the executive board,

Nick von Schoenberg  
President

Scott Loder  
Executive Vice President